

Activity 1: Analyzing Errors

The narrator feels uncomfortable whenever she witnesses an encounter between her grandmother and Mrs. Flowers. Where does this shame come from? Is the problem really about her grandmother, or is it something else?

Describe the error in reasoning that leads to the narrator's shame. Consider

- what her grandmother's actions symbolize to the narrator.
- how Mrs. Flowers gently corrects the narrator's error in reasoning.
- that the excerpt is written from the perspective of an adult reflecting on a childhood experience.

Activity 2: Abstraction

Maya Angelou says about Mrs. Flowers: "She appealed to me because she was like people I had never met personally." To be a role model, it certainly helps to be captivating. What other traits do role models commonly possess?

Imagine you're a producer responsible for choosing contestants for a new "Great Role Models" reality show. Develop a list of criteria for the role models you would profile. Begin by skimming the excerpt to jot down details about Mrs. Flowers. Build on these with other traits or abilities. Once you have your criteria, you might take the further step of choosing whom would qualify among people you already know.